

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 IO-13 DHA-02

CU-02 HEW-04 /106 W

-----300045Z 070406 /13

P 281730Z APR 77

FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 982

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL MONTREAL

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 3 QUEBEC 0174

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BGEN, CA

SUBJECT: QUEBEC LANGUAGE BILL DIFFERS LITTLE FROM WHITE PAPER

REF: A) QUEBEC 0158, B) QUEBEC 0143

1. SUMMARY: CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER CAMILLE LAURIN PRESENTED HIS GOVERNMENT'S LANGUAGE LEGISLATION APRIL 27. IT DIFFERS SURPRISINGLY LITTLE FROM PROPOSALS IN WHITE PAPER ISSUED APRIL 1. ONLY SIGNIFICANT CHANGE WAS THAT COMPANIES WILL BE ABLE TO PLEAD COURT CASES IN ENGLISH IF OTHER PARTIES AGREE. BILL PASSED FIRST READING--OFFICIAL PRESENTATION-- YESTERDAY WITH LIBERALS VOTING AGAINST IT. MAIN OPPOSITION TO BILL COMING FROM THOSE WHO FEEL BILL IS TOO HARSH AND DICTATORIAL IN CONCEPTION, ESPECIALLY VIS-A-VIS ANGLOPHONE MINORITY RIGHTS. PUBLIC HEARINGS WILL NOW BE HELD FOLLOWED BY CLAUSE BY CLAUSE STUDY. GOQ WOULD LIKE PASS BILL BY JUNE 24 BUT INTENSE OPPOSITION MAY CAUSE DEADLINE TO SLIP. GOQ DECLARES ITSELF READY TO ACCEPT REASONED AMENDMENTS TO BILL AS LONG AS ESSENTIAL GOALS NOT CHANGED.

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MOST LIKELY TO BE AMENDED IS CLAUSE CALLING FOR FRENCH-LANGUAGE EDUCATION OF ANGLOPHONE CANADIAN CHILDREN COMING FROM OTHER PROVINCES

. LINGUISTIC AND SCHOOL RIGHTS OF ANGLOPHONES WILL BE MOST EMOTIONAL ISSUE IN UPCOMING DEBATE. MANAGEMENT OF BILL WILL PRESENT GOQ WITH REAL TEST OF ABILITY TO BALANCE COMPETING FACTIONS IN QUEBEC SOCIETY. BEYOND ARGUMENTS ON MERITS OF BILL

WILL LOOM FEARS OF OVERALL PQ STRATEGICAL INTENT. END SUMMARY.

2. QUEBEC'S PQ GOVERNMENT PRESENTED ITS MUCH-DISCUSSED LANGUAGE LEGISLATION APRIL 27. SYMBOLICALLY NUMBERED BILL 1 (ONE), LEGISLATION FOLLOWS WHITE PAPER PRESENTED APRIL 1 (REFTEL B) VERY CLOSELY. THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT DEVIATION FROM WHITE PAPER WAS ARTICLE DEALING WITH THE LANGUAGE OF COURTS, WITH THE BILL ALLOWING THE USE OF ENGLISH IN A COURT ACTION INVOLVING COMPANIES "IF ALL PARTIES INVOLVED AGREE." MANY ANGLO-PHONE BUSINESSMEN FEEL EVEN THIS IS JUST A COSMETIC CHANGE AS MOST OF THEIR COURT CASES ARE WITH THE UNIONS WHO WILL NEVER AGREE TO USE OF ENGLISH. ONLY OTHER CHANGE GIVES A STAY OF EXECUTION TO ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SCHOOL BOARDS AND GOVERNMENTS IN PREDOMINANTLY ENGLISH SPEAKING AREAS WHO NOW HAVE UNTIL 1983 TO MAKE SWITCHOVER TO FRENCH IN OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS. IN THE MEANTIME, HOWEVER, THEY MUST PRODUCE FRENCH VERSIONS OF SUCH DOCUMENTS ON DEMAND. TEXT OF BILL ONE IS MORE COMPLETE AND DIRECT THAN WHITE PAPER. ITS 177 ARTICLES PROPOSE--AS DID WHITE PAPER--TO MAKE FRENCH PROVINCE'S SOLE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE IN ALL FACETS OF LIFE. (TEXT TOUCHED EUR/CAN).

3. HIGHLIGHTS OF BILL ONE INCLUDE:

--ONLY THE FRENCH VERSION OF QUEBEC LAWS, COURT JUDGMENTS, COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS AND ARBITRATION RULINGS ARE OFFICIAL.
--NO ONE CAN BE APPOINTED, TRANSFERRED OR PROMOTED TO A JOB IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION WITHOUT "APPROPRIATE" KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH.
--ALL OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS OF THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION MUST BE IN FRENCH.
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AAROAD SIGNS WILL BE IN FRENCH ONLY.
--PROFESSIONAL CORPORATIONS MUST COMMUNICATE IN FRENCH WITH THEIR MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC.
--WITH THE EXCEPTION OF TEMPORARY PERMITS FOR OUTSIDERS, PROFESSIONAL CORPORATIONS MUST ONLY ISSUE LICENCES TO PRACTICE TO PERSONS WHO HAVE "APPROPRIATE" KNOWLEDGE OF FRENCH.
--ANY EMPLOYEE HAS THE RIGHT TO RECEIVE WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS FROM HIS EMPLOYERS IN FRENCH.
--ANY EMPLOYER WHO REQUIRES A JOB CANDIDATE TO SPEAK ANOTHER LANGUAGE THAN FRENCH MUST PROVE THAT THE JOB REQUIRES SUCH KNOWLEDGE.
--GAMES OR TOYS WHOSE OPERATION REQUIRES USE OF A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN FRENCH CANNOT BE OFFERED TO THE PUBLIC UNLESS A FRENCH VERSION IS AVAILABLE ON THE MARKET.

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XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 IO-13 DHA-02
HEW-04 CU-02 /106 W
-----300044Z 070243 /13

P 281730Z APR 77
FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC
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INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
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--EVERY PERSON HAS A RIGHT TO DEMAND JOB APPLICATION FORMS,
ORDER FORMS, INVOICES, RECEIPT, MENUS AND WINE LISTS IN
FRENCH.
--ALL FIRMS MUST HAVE A FRENCH NAME FOR USE IN QUEBEC, BUT THEY
CAN USE A NAME IN ANOTHER LANGUAGE OUTSIDE QUEBEC.
--ADMISSION TO ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SCHOOLS WILL BE RESTRICTED TO
CHILDREN WHOSE MOTHER OR FATHER ATTENDED ENGLISH ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL IN QUEBEC.
--CHILDREN ALREADY ENROLLED IN ENGLISH SCHOOLS AND THEIR
YOUNGER BROTHERS AND SISTERS, NOT OTHERWISE ELIGIBLE, WILL
BE ALLOWED TO ATTEND SUCH SCHOOLS.
--NO HIGH SCHOOL LEAVING CERTIFICATE WILL BE AWERDED UNLESS A
STUDENT HAS MET DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION STANDARDS OF WRITTEN
AND SPOKEN FRENCH.
--THE FRENCH LANGUAGE BOARD, NOW RESPONSIBLE FOR LANGUAGE RESEARCH,
APPLICATION OF LANGUAGE LAW, INVESTIGATION OF VIOLATIONS AND
ADVISING THE GOVERNMENT, WILL BE REPLACED BY FOUR BODIES--
A FRENCH LANGUAGE BUREAU, A SUPERVISORY COMMISSION, AN ADVISORY
COUNCIL AND A COMMISSION ON PLACE NAMES.
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RM THE VOTE FOR FIRST READING--OFFICIAL PRESENTATION--IN THE 110
SEAT ASSEMBLY WAS 72 TO 21, WITH LIBERAL OFFICIAL OPPOSITION
VOTING EN BLOC AGAINST BILL. VOTE DEMONSTRATED EXTENT OF LIBERAL
OBJECTIONS TO BILL AS FIRST READING IS TRADITIONALLY ACCOMPLISHED

WITHOUT OPPOSITION. LIBERAL LEADER GERARD D. LEVESQUE ANNOUNCED HIS PARTY WILL OPPOSE BILL AS DICTATORIAL IN TONE AND NOT RESPECTING RIGHTS OF ANGLOPHONES. WITH EXCEPTION OF ANGLOPHONE WILLIAM SHAW, UN DEPUTIES VOTED FOR BILL BUT LEADER RODRIGUE BIRON ANNOUNCED HIS PARTY WILL FIGHT FOR RIGHTS OF QUEBEC ANGLOPHONES THROUGHOUT UPCOMING DEBATE. SHAW LEFT ASSEMBLY AND FIRED OFF TELEGRAM TO PRIME MINISTER ASKING FOR SUPREME COURT RULING ON CONSTITUTIONALITY OF LEGISLATION.

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5. THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION NOW GOES TO A COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY WHICH WILL HEAR BRIEFS FROM GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS. HEARINGS ARE SCHEDULED BEGIN EARLY IN MAY. AFTER THAT, LEGISLATION GETS CLAUSE BY CLAUSE STUDY WHICH COULD TAKE SOME WEEKS IF OPPOSITION CHOOSES TO FILIBUSTER. PQ GOVERNMENT WOULD LIKE LEGISLATION TO PASS THIRD AND FINAL READING BY JUNE 24, QUEBEC'S "NATIONAL" HOLIDAY. HOWEVER, OPPOSITION IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PROMISES TO BE SO DETAILED AND SO INTENSIVE THAT MANY FEEL THERE IS NO CHANCE THAT BILL 1 WILL BE VOTED INTO LAW BY THEN. IT IS EVEN QUESTIONABLE THAT IT WILL BE ENACTED IN TIME TO BE OPERATIONAL FOR SCHOOL TERM WHICH STARTS IN SEPTEMBER. IN 1974, LIBERAL GOVERNMENT WITH STRONG MAJORITY OF 102 OUT OF 110 SEATS AND LESS-ORGANIZED CIVIC OPPOSITION THAN PQ FACES NOW WAS DELAYED TWO MONTHS IN ADOPTING ITS LANGUAGE LEGISLATION.

6. COMMENT: NOW THAT GOVERNMENT HAS PUT FORTH LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS, OFFICIAL DEBATE CAN BEGIN IN EARNEST. WHITE PAPER WAS A PARTY DOCUMENT FOLLOWING GENERAL LINES OF PARTY PROGRAM. ITS SOCIOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL IMPORTANCE WAS COMMENTED ON IN REFTEL B. LEGISLATION IS, OF COURSE, OFFICIAL PROJECT OF GOVERNMENT. TO THE SURPRISE OF MANY, THERE IS LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TWO. OPPOSITION FROM ANGLOPHONES AND SOME FRANCOPHONE BUSINESSMEN SINCE PRESENTATION OF WHITE PAPER HAD BEEN SO INTENSE THAT MANY EXPECTED MORE MODIFICATIONS (REFTEL A). ESPECIALLY SURPRISING TO MANY OBSERVERS WAS GOQ FAILURE TO RELENT NOW ON FRENCH EDUCATION FOR ANGLOPHONE CANADIAN CHILDREN MOVING TO QUEBEC FROM OTHER PROVINCES.

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L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SS-15 IO-13 DHA-02 CU-02

HEW-04 /106 W

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P 281730Z APR 77

FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 984

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

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MANY CONSIDERED THIS CLAUSE AS ANTICIPATING SOVEREIGNTY IN THAT CANADIAN TIE WAS REJECTED. GOQ COULD STILL ACCEPT AMENDMENT ALLOWING ENGLISH EDUCATION FOR THESE CHILDREN WITHOUT FEAR THAT ANGLOPHONE COMMUNITY WOULD GROW AS FEW ANGLOPHONES ARE MOVING TO QUEBEC. GOQ OBVIOUSLY DECIDED TO STICK WITH TOUGH BILL AND LET CHANGES, IF ANY, BE EFFECTED BY AMENDMENT PROCESS. PREMIER LEVESQUE AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT MINISTER LAURIN HAVE BOTH SAID THAT THEY WOULD BE OPEN TO ANY THOUGHTFUL, CONSTRUCTIVE AMENDMENTS PRESENTED, AS LONG AS BILL'S ESSENTIAL THRUST--PROMOTION OF FRENCH IN ALL ASPECTS OF QUEBEC LIFE--REMAINS.

7. ONE OF MOST EMOTIONAL ISSUES IN PUBLIC DEBATE WILL BE LINGUISTIC AND SCHOOL RIGHTS OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING QUEBECERS. MANY ANGLOPHONES FEEL THAT DEBATE WILL BE A TEST OF GOOD FAITH OF PREMIER LEVESQUE'S GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS INSISTENTLY PROMISED ENGLISH QUEBECERS BASIC LANGUAGE AND SCHOOL GUARANTEES EVEN IF QUEBEC WERE TO BECOME INDEPENDENT. MOST FRANCOPHONES, ON OTHER HAND, WILL SEE DEBATE AS TEST OF GOQ'S INTENTION TO, AS LAURIN SAID YESTERDAY, PUT A FINISH TO THE PERIOD OF SETTLING PAST GRIEVANCES
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AS WELL AS THE PERIOD OF CULTURAL AND SOCIAL INSECURITY. LAURIN HAS BEEN TRYING TO STRIKE SOME SORT OF COMPROMISE BETWEEN TWO GROUPS EVEN WHILE LEANING HEAVILY TOWARD FRANCOPHONES. REAL TEST OF GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY TO BALANCE COMPETING FACTIONS IN QUEBEC SOCIETY WILL COME DURING SECOND AND THIRD READINGS. WHILE GOVERNMENT DECLARES ITSELF OPEN TO POSITIVE AMENDMENTS, IT MUST CAREFULLY MANAGE THE DEBATE AS IT UNFOLDS. IT CAN ALWAYS CALL ON ITS MORE ARDENT NATIONALIST SUPPORTERS (INCLUDING MANY WHO FEEL BILL DOES NOT YET GO FAR ENOUGH) TO BOTH DEMONSTRATE PRESSURES WORKING ON GOQ AND BALANCE ANY ANGLOPHONE OR OTHER

FEDERALIST ARGUMENTS, SUCH AS EMPHASIS ON COERCIVENESS OF BILL, WHICH MIGHT THREATEN EO MOVE FRANCOPHONE PUBLIC OPINION AWAY FROM ACCEPTANCE OF SOME MAJOR ROVISIONS IN BILL.

8. BEHIND ARGUMENTS OVER VARIOUS CLAUSES AND MINORITY RIGHTS WILL LOOM FEARS THAT PQ INTSNDNS TO ELIMINATE ANGLOPHONE COMMUNITY COMPLETELY AND/OR USE BILL AS STRATEGICAL PLOY TO PROVOKE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFRONTATION WITH OTTAWA. WHILE AE BELIEVE THAT PQ DOES NOT WANT TO SEE ANGLOPHONES DISAPPEAR FROM QUEBEC,

PARTY WOULD NOT BE ADVERSE TO GRADUAL ASSIMILATION OF MANY INTO FRANCOPHONE COMMUNITY. BILL MIGHT SERVE AS CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS TRIGGER AND THAT FACT HAS NOT BEEN FOREIGN TO PQ DELIBERATIONSJM HOWEVER, MAIN PURPOSE OF BILL IS TO ADDRESS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE VEXING LANGUAGE PROBLEM AND THE KEY TO ECONOMIC POWER IN THE PROVINCE WHICH LIES BEHIND IT.
MCNAMARA

COMM NOTE: DUE TO INSTALLATION OF TERP EQUIPMENT IN OTTAWA AS OF TODAY, WE WILL BE SENDING QUEBEC CLASS TFC DIRECTLY TO DEPT. UNTIL MONTREAL CAN BE ESTABLISHED AS NEW CRYPTOGUARD.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, LEGISLATIVE BILLS, OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 28-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977QUEBEC00174
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770151-0222
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From: QUEBEC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 QUEBEC 158, 77 QUEBEC 143
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22-Dec-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2903175
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: QUEBEC LANGUAGE BILL DIFFERS LITTLE FROM WHITE PAPER
TAGS: PINT, BGEN, CA, (LAURIN, CAMILLE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/756179aa-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009